

Amendments to the Specification

A. On page 7, beginning on line 16, please replace the paragraph beginning with "In the illustrative" and ending with "incorporated by reference" with:

"In the illustrative embodiment of Figure 1a plurality of network elements (NEs) NE-A, NE-B, NE-C, and NE-D are interconnected to form a network 100. NE-A 102 includes four ports, p1,p2, p3, and p4. Each of the ports p1, p2, p3 and p4 may comprise electrical or optical interface circuitry and data may be transmitted or received through each of the ports. A network link, over which data may be transmitted and received, may be formed by attaching a port within one network element to a port within another network element through a transmission path such as an electrical cable or an optical fiber. A controller 104 is associated with the NE-A 102 and may be physically co-located within the same package as the NE-A 102 or may be located separately, with a communications path provided to the NE-A 102. The controller 104 may take any of a variety of forms, such as an embedded controller, dedicated to the associated network element, or it may be a controller such as a DACScan 2000 <sup>TM</sup> as described in "Understanding SONET/SDH Standards and Applications, Ming-Chwan Chow, pp. 7-1 through 7-40, Andan Publisher, New Jersey, 1995, which is hereby incorporated by reference." As such, in various embodiments of the present invention, the controller 104 may be a general purpose computer that is programmed to perform various control functions, such as an alarm processing system 105 (described in detail below), in accordance with the present invention."